



## Union Station project in Springfield gets \$467,400 contribution from MassDevelopment environmental work

[Peter Goonan, The Republican](#) By [Peter Goonan, The Republican](#)

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on April 25, 2013 at 9:18 PM, updated April 25, 2013 at 9:20 PM

SPRINGFIELD — [MassDevelopment](#), the state's economic development finance arm, has provided a new, \$467,400 grant to aid the long-awaited, \$78 million [Union Station](#) redevelopment project .

The grant, announced Thursday by MassDevelopment and local officials, is for environmental work needed to raze a vacant parking garage at 70 Frank B. Murray St., directly across the street from Union Station. Following the environmental assessment and cleanup of the garage, it will be torn down and replaced by a parking lot and bus bays serving the Union Station regional intermodal transportation center.

Mayor [Domenic J. Sarno](#), in a prepared statement, said he is very grateful to MassDevelopment and Gov. Deval Patrick's administration "for their continued support in moving this economically vital project forward."

With the latest grant, MassDevelopment has now provided nearly \$2.1 million in funding for environmental work at Union Station and the abutting former Hotel Charles property, and the parking garage site. In January, MassDevelopment announced a \$650,000 grant, also through its brownfield redevelopment fund, for environmental assessment and mitigation at Union Station, as part of its commitment in funds.

"Brownfields money is highly sought after by many communities and is limited, so we appreciate the high priority MassDevelopment has placed on Union Station and its importance in the regional economy," Sarno said.

The [Springfield Redevelopment Authority](#) owns Union Station, and the parking garage across the street. The authority took ownership of the garage property and land recently, taken by eminent domain for \$215,000, from Peter A. Picknelly of Park View North LCC, according to the authority and records with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds.

Union Station was built in 1926, and has been closed since 1973. The city's plans, aided by federal and state funds, is to have the station serve as a center for passenger trains, local and regional buses and taxis.

The first phase costing \$48.6 million, will include restoration of the terminal building, demolition of the baggage building, construction of a 24-bay bus terminal and a parking garage, and reopening of a passenger

tunnel. The second phase will include developing more retail and office space at Union Station including the upper floors.

MassDevelopment is a quasi-public finance agency and has contributed loan and grant funds to various local economic development projects. MassDevelopment also purchased the former federal courthouse building at 1550 Main St., converted for various office uses including serving as leased space to the Springfield School Department for its central officers.

"Easing access to and from Springfield will spur growth in both the city of Homes and the Pioneer Valley," said Marty Jones, president and chief executive officer of MassDevelopment. "This contribution from the brownfields fund along with our redevelopment work at 1550 Main will help Springfield fully realize its potential as a regional jobs center."

U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal, who took a lead role in securing millions of dollars in federal funding for Union Station, said the latest grant from MassDevelopment "helps reach another important milestone."

The planned demolition of the old garage at 30 Frank B. Murray St., will help provide new parking and additional bus bays, Neal said.

"I have always believed turning Union Station into a 21st Century transportation center would be a great asset for the entire region," Neal said. "We are one step closer to that goal."

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